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## OPEN LETTERS.

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### BROMUS SECALINUS GERMINATING ON ICE.

*To the Editors of the Botanical Gazette* :— In the summer of 1895, G. H. True brought into the botanical laboratory some cakes of ice taken from the margin or top of the mass in the ice house, where the straw came in contact with them. Among the rubbish were a considerable number of grains of oats, chess, and perhaps seeds of other plants. Right in contact with the ice were kernels of chess with plumules half to three-fourths of an inch long and roots, some of which were very nearly two inches long. Numerous roots of chess in their growth had penetrated the clear ice for most of their length by thawing small holes with a diameter about three times that of the roots. Some of the roots curved more or less, but were easily removed.—W. J. BEAL, *Agricultural College, Mich.*

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### THE METRIC SYSTEM AND THE "ILLUSTRATED FLORA."

*To the Editors of the Botanical Gazette* :— Referring to your editorial in the February GAZETTE concerning the use of the metric system, in which you express your regret that it was not taken up in *Illustrated Flora*, I submit the following extracts from correspondence which will indicate our position in the matter.

Regents Office, Albany, N. Y., Feb. 18, 1897

Dear Professor Britton :

The enclosed seems to me a just criticism, unless you have some special reason for sticking by the old measure, instead of using the metric I admire so much your book that I was sorry to see you using the old measures.

Yours very truly,

MELVIL DEWEY.

New York City, Feb. 23, 1897

Dear Sir :

Dr. Britton has enclosed to me your favor of the 18th inst., with Professor Bessey's notes from the *Naturalist* on the metric system, and the omission of the *Illustrated Flora* to adopt it.

No doubt you are both quite right, looking at the subject from a scientific point of view alone. But the work, while intended to be as perfect as possible within the necessary limits, had to be arranged partly in reference to the general public. The work is planned not only for professors and students,